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General and complete disarmament: small arms

Small arms

Programme budget implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1, the General Assembly would:

(a) Decide to convene the United Nations conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects in June/July 2001;

(b) Also decide to establish a preparatory committee open to participation by all States, which would hold no less than three sessions, with its first session to be held in New York from 28 February to 3 March 2000;

(c) Also request the preparatory committee to decide, at its first session, on the date and venue of the conference in 2001 as well as on the dates and venue of its subsequent sessions;

(d) Request the preparatory committee to make recommendations to the conference on all relevant matters, including the objective, a draft agenda, draft rules of procedure and draft final documents, which would include a programme of action, and decide on background documents to be made available in advance;

(e) Invite all Member States, in particular those which have not yet done so, in response to the Secretary-General's note verbale of 20 January 1999, to communicate to the Secretary-General their views on the agenda and other relevant questions relating to the conference;

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(f) Request the Secretary-General to transmit the replies of Member States relevant to paragraph (e) above to the preparatory committee and to render the preparatory committee and the conference all necessary assistance, including the provision of essential background information, relevant documents and summary records;

(g) Endorse the report of the Secretary-General on small arms, prepared with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/38 J, bearing in mind the views of Member States on the report;

(h) Request the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the report as well as on the implementation of the relevant recommendations contained therein;

(i) Also request the Secretary-General to implement the relevant recommendations contained in section IV of the report within available financial resources and with any other assistance provided by the States in a position to do so and in cooperation with appropriate international and regional organizations where necessary;

(j) Further request the Secretary-General, in order to assist in preventing the illicit trafficking in and illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons:

(i) To carry out a study, within available financial resources and with any other assistance provided by Member States in a position to do so, and with the assistance of governmental experts appointed by him, on the basis of equitable geographical representation, while seeking the views of Member States, on the feasibility of restricting the manufacture of and trade in such weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States, which will cover the brokering activities, in particular illicit activities, relating to small arms and light weapons, including transportation agents and financial transactions;

(ii) To submit the study as one of the background documents for the conference to be held in 2001.

B. Relationship of the requests to the programme of work

2. The activities referred to above would fall under programme 26, Disarmament, programme 27, General Assembly affairs and conference services, and programme 23, Public information, of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001. While provision has been made under section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, for activities envisaged under operative paragraphs 10, 12, 13 and 14 (a), provision has not been made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 for the convening of the international conference referred to in operative paragraph 1 nor for the preparatory committee and related activities referred to in operative paragraphs 3, 5, 7 and 9.

C. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

3. Pursuant to operative paragraph 3, the Department for Disarmament Affairs would serve as the substantive secretariat for the sessions of the preparatory committee and for the conference. In accordance with operative paragraphs 5 and 7, the Department would assist in the preparation of the draft agenda, draft rules of procedure and draft final documents, which would include a programme of action. The Department would also facilitate the provision of background documents to be made available in advance of the

sessions of the preparatory committee and of any other documents as might be required by the preparatory committee for the conference itself.

4. Pursuant to operative paragraph 9, the Department would be responsible for rendering the preparatory committee and the conference all necessary assistance, including the provision of essential background information and relevant documents. With regard to the provision of summary records, attention is drawn to paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 37/14 C of 16 November 1982, in which the Assembly confirmed that summary records should not be provided to special conferences and their preparatory organs, with the exception of legal codification conferences, for which the needs would be determined in each case.

5. Pursuant to operative paragraphs 10, 12 and 13, the Department would undertake activities, within its programme of work for the biennium 2000-2001, in response to recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms.

6. With respect to operative paragraph 14 (a), the Department would convene an expert group to study the feasibility of restricting the manufacture of and trade in small arms and light weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States. The report of the expert group would be used as one of the background documents for the conference in accordance with paragraph 14 (b) of the draft resolution.

7. Consistent with established practice as regards United Nations special conferences, public information activities would be undertaken by the Department of Public Information to publicize the conference and the issues to be addressed.

D. Modifications required in the programme of work for 2000-2001

8. No provision has been made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 for the convening of the international conference and its preparatory committee. Consequently, provisions for the related requirements would have to be made under section 4, Disarmament, and section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services, and section 26, Public information, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

E. Additional requirements at full cost

1. Conference-servicing requirements

9. Taking into account that New York is the established headquarters for activities related to the conference, it is assumed that the meetings for the conference and preparatory committee would be convened in New York. It is envisaged that conference-servicing costs, amounting to $1,599,700 at full cost, would be incurred with respect to the following:

(a) It is assumed that three sessions of the preparatory committee would be held in New York in 2000 and 2001, the first session having a duration of 5 days and each of the subsequent sessions having a duration of 10 days, with one meeting in the morning and one in the afternoon. Simultaneous interpretation would be provided in the six official languages of the United Nations. In addition, 150 pages of in-session documentation and 50 pages of post-session documentation would be provided at each session of the preparatory committee. On the basis of these assumptions, estimated costs for the first session of the preparatory committee would amount to $254,300 (excluding $56,200 for the provision of

summary records). On the same basis, costs for the second and third sessions of the preparatory committee are estimated at $325,500 per session (excluding $112,500 for the provision of summary records). Therefore, the total estimated conference-servicing costs (excluding summary records) of holding the three sessions of the preparatory committee are $905,300. (See the annex for a breakdown of the costs);

(b) On the assumption that the duration of the conference would be 10 days, with two meetings in the morning and two in the afternoon, and interpretation and documentation in the six official languages of the United Nations, the related costs are estimated at $694,400 (excluding $167,700 for summary records). (See the annex for a breakdown of the costs.)

2. Summary records

10. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 34/17 C (see para. 4 above), neither the conference nor its preparatory committee would be entitled to the provision of summary records, the cost of which is estimated at $448,900.

3. Non-conference-servicing requirements

Temporary assistance

11. Temporary assistance equivalent to 18 work-months at the P-4 level and 24 work-months at the General Service (Other level) would be required for the planning, organization and convening of the conference and its preparatory committee, including the following:

(a) The preparation of documents required for submission to the conference and the sessions of the preparatory committee;

(b) The establishment and maintenance of effective channels of communication with Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other interested groups in response to the wide and diverse interest that is expected to be shown in the preparations for the conference;

(c) The overall planning, organizational and administrative arrangements necessary for the preparation of the sessions of the preparatory committee and the conference.

12. The requirements for temporary assistance are estimated at $313,400 ($166,100 in 2000 and $147,300 in 2001).

Consultants

13. The equivalent of six work-months of consultancy services would be needed to provide expertise in addressing the issues to be considered by the preparatory committee and the conference and in contributing to the preparation of relevant background documents. The related costs are estimated to be $71,200, including travel and daily subsistence allowance.

Public information activities

14. For major conferences convened by the Secretary-General, provision is made for requirements of public coverage. In its proposed programme budget for 2000-2001, the Department of Public Information has included provisions for public information activities related to eight special meetings and conferences to be convened during 2000-2001. No provision, however, has been included for the United Nations conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

15. Additional related information activities would highlight the goals and purposes of the Conference and the sessions of its Preparatory Committee, with a view to attracting wide support for and interest in it. In this context, due note is taken of the third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution which refers to "the important role of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in preventing and reducing the excessive and destabilizing accumulations of small arms and light weapons". The Department of Public Information, in collaboration with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, would develop an information strategy that would entail, *inter alia*: regular articles in the *UN Chronicle*; radio feature programmes and the "UN in Action" television series; screenings of the United Nations Television documentary on small arms; display of the Department for Disarmament Affairs-United Nations Children's Fund exhibit at the site of the conference; translation of information materials into local languages and events organized at the national level by United Nations information centres located in the countries most affected by small arms ($20,000); creation of a special page on the United Nations Web site ($5,000); and a press kit for the conference in English, French and Spanish ($30,000). Total requirements for these activities are estimated at $55,000.

16. On the assumption that the conference and the preparatory committee sessions would be held in New York, it is estimated that an amount of $283,500 would be required for the Department of Public Information to carry out press coverage of the conference and its preparatory committee. Such costs would cover temporary assistance for press officers, editors, Internet technicians and support staff. Together with the requirements mentioned in paragraph 15 above, the total estimated costs for public information activities would amount to $338,500.

Group of governmental experts on the feasibility study

17. The convening of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/38 J, has been included in section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

18. The requirements estimated in paragraphs 9 to 17 above are summarized as follows:

		United States dollars
A.	Conference-servicing costs[1]	1 599 700
	(First session)	254 300
	(Second session)	325 500
	(Third session)	325 500
	(Conference)	694 400
B.	Non-conference-servicing requirements[2]	1 025 100
	Total estimated cost (on a full cost basis)	**2 624 800**

[1] Excluding the provision of summary records estimated at $448,900.

[2] Including the requirements of $302,000 for three meetings in 2000-2001 of the group of governmental experts to study the feasibility of restricting the manufacture and trade of small arms and light weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States.

F. Potential for absorption

19. Provisions in the amount of $302,000 for three meetings in 2000-2001 of the group of governmental experts to study the feasibility of restricting the manufacture and trade of small arms and light weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States are included in section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. However, no other provisions have been made under that section nor under section 26, Public information, for other activities related to the sessions of the preparatory committee and the conference.

20. The conference-servicing requirements, exclusive of summary records, of the preparatory committee and the conference are estimated at $1,599,700, at full cost. The extent to which the Organization's capacity would need to be supplemented by temporary assistance resources can be determined only in the light of the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2000-2001. Provision is made under the relevant section for conference services of the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, not only for meetings programmed at the time of budget preparation, but also for meetings authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings are consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years. Consequently, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, no additional appropriation would be required.

21. Should the General Assembly decide on the provision of summary records, an additional provision would be required for temporary assistance in the amount of $448,900.

G. Contingency fund

22. It will be recalled that, under the procedure established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 and, in effect, starting with the biennium 1990-1991, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under the same procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed resources available from the contingency fund, those activities can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modifications of projected activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred until a later biennium. A consolidated statement of all programme budget implications and revised estimates will be submitted to the Assembly towards the end of its current session.

H. Summary

23. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1, it is estimated that an additional appropriation of $723,100 would be required in the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001, as follows: under section 4, Disarmament ($384,600); and under section 26, Public information ($338,500). Should the General Assembly decide on the provision of summary records, an additional appropriation of $448,900 would be required under section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services. In addition, an amount of $56,500 would be required under section 32 , Staff assessment, to be offset by the same amount under income Section 1, Income from staff assessment for the additional staff for the Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Annex

Estimates on a full-cost basis of conference-servicing and non-conference-servicing costs of the conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and of the sessions of its preparatory committee

(United States dollars)

		Group of governmental experts	*First session of the preparatory committee*	*Second session of the preparatory committee*	*Third session of the preparatory committee*	*Conference*	*Total*
1	*Conference-servicing costs*[a]						
	In-session documentation		139 900	139 900	139 900	323 100	742 800
	Post-session documentation		42 600	42 600	42 600	85 300	213 100
	Meeting services and interpretation		65 900	131 300	131 300	262 500	591 000
	Other requirements		5 900	11 700	11 700	23 500	52 800
	Total, 1	**-**	**254 300**	**325 500**	**325 500**	**694 400**	**1 599 700**
2	*Non-conference-servicing costs*						
	Temporary assistance (18 work-months at P-4 and 24 work-months at GS (OL))		-	-	-	313 400	313 400
	Consultants		10 300	20 300	20 300	20 300	71 200
	Travel of experts	302 000	-	-	-	-	302 000
	Press coverage and public information activities		40 300	80 600	80 600	137 000	338 500
	Total, 2	**302 000**	**45 200**	**86 900**	**86 900**	**496 500**	**1 025 100**
	Grand total (1 + 2)	**302 000**	**299 500**	**412 400**	**412 400**	**1 190 900**	**2 624 800**

[a] Excluding $448,900 which would be required should the General Assembly decide on the provision of summary records for the conference and its preparatory committee.